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RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE  
RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE  
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 KHARTOUM 000564

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SE GRATION, S/USSES, AF A A/S, AF/C, AF/E  
NSC FOR MGA VIN AND CHUDSON  
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN  
ADDIS ABABA ALSO FOR USAU

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SUBJECT: JONGLEI VIOLENCE POLARIZES, PARALYZES JUBA

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Classified By: CDA Alberto M. Fernandez, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (SBU) SUMMARY: While renewed violence in Jonglei state has pushed Juba's diplomatic and donor community into hyper-drive, the Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS) continues to take a more measured approach to containing tensions within the South's largest state. This difference in approach has placed otherwise ideal GOSS-donor relations under some strain: ranking ministers have chafed under perceived donor and UNMIS "paternalism." Undeterred by such criticism, UN DPKO has approved the restructuring of UNMIS peacekeepers in the South: three peacekeeping platoons will be deployed into Jonglei, and an UNMIS Force Reserve will be established in either Bor or Malakal. GOSS President Kiir has renewed internal discussions on forced disarmament of the civilian population, and the SPLA has established a taskforce to explore conflict mitigation options, to include a SPLA-managed weapons buy-back program. Such closed-door discussions by the GOSS, however, have left a public relations vacuum: six days passed following the last round of clashes before GOSS President Salva Kiir went on the record to condemn the violence. Since January 2009, 100,000 Southerners have been displaced a result of various conflicts in the South. END SUMMARY.

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TWO MONTHS OF VIOLENCE IN JONGLEI  
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12. (SBU) Renewed clashes between Murle and Luo Nuer ethnic groups in Jonglei State's Akobo County April 18-19 resulted in an estimated 150-220 dead, and displaced 15,000 into Akobo town. GOSS relief agencies are conducting a village-by-village "head-count" for missing persons to establish a more precise picture of the fatalities. Akobo County Commissioner Doyak Chol told Acting CG on April 22 that he fears the death toll could exceed 300. The Akobo clashes occurred barely four weeks after inter-tribal conflict between the same two groups in Jonglei's Pibor County left an estimated 750 civilians dead.

13. (SBU) The week-long fighting in Pibor in early March pitted thousands of Luo Nuer youth from three separate counties (unconfirmed estimates range from 2,000 to 10,000) against a largely unarmed Murle civilian population. Prior to the April 18 Akobo violence, UNMIS/Juba Civil Affairs began receiving unverified reports of an 8,000-strong armed "Murle Youth Militia" in Jonglei State. Juba-based

Assessment and Evaluation Commission (AEC) representatives told Acting CG April 24 that GOSS President Kiir told AEC Chairman Derek Plumbly that he believed "indisputably" that Khartoum was actively arming the Murle community in the aftermath of the March Pibor violence to "destabilize Southern Sudan" in advance of the elections and 2011 referendum (the Murle, fearing domination by the larger Nuer and Dinka, largely fought on the side of Khartoum in the decades-long Sudanese Civil War).

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UN HUMANITARIAN COORDINATOR: WE'RE OVER-STRETCHED"  
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15. (SBU) The scale of the March Pibor County violence in Jonglei State led UNMIS Sector III Force Commander to unilaterally deploy a company of approximately 150 peacekeeping troops around the Dinka Bor village of Anyidi following April 5 clashes between Dinka Bor youth and Murle cattle raiders. Although unsanctioned by New York, senior UNMIS officials consider this the first time UNMIS has exercised its Chapter Seven mandate since the UN arrived in Sudan in 2004. The long-overdue move was controversial within UNMIS, and is reportedly under internal review. Consequently, UNMIS did not deploy to Akobo during the April 18-19 clashes, although the UN Resident Coordinator's office has since made 4,000 flight hours available to GOSS, Jonglei State, and county-level officials to facilitate grass-roots conflict-mitigation efforts. The Southern Sudan Peace Commission hosted a productive meeting on the Nuer-Murle "Ceasefire Commission" on April 22 in Juba, and UNMIS provided commission members with transport into Akobo County on April 24.

16. (SBU) Pressed by British diplomats to account for the Sector III commander's decision to deploy to protect

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civilians near Anyidi during an April 22 briefing to Juba's diplomatic corps, UN Resident Coordinator David Gressly steered the conversation towards improving the UN's ability to detect and mitigate conflict in Jonglei State. Despite two years of efforts to support state-level responses to conflict in Jonglei, to include establishing an UNMIS Security Sector Assistance Coordination Cell in Bor, UNMIS has been unable to establish a presence in sprawling Jonglei beyond the state capital. Donor support is desperately needed, Gressly said.

17. (SBU) UN Southern Sector Humanitarian Coordinator (UN HC) Lise Grande underscored Gressly's point, noting that her office is over-taxed by the number of ongoing conflicts in the South. She said there are currently 24 "Emergency Preparedness and Response" missions deployed in the field to respond to local violence, a three-fold increase over the number of EPR missions conducted in all of 2008. "If what we've seen in the first-four months of this year continues, we will exhaust our ability to respond -- we simply do not have the funds."

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A GOVERNOR'S FRUSTRATION  
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18. (SBU) Jonglei Governor Kuol Manieng expressed considerable frustration on April 18 and on April 25. Manieng, a veteran SPLA commander and a 2008 contender for the then-vacant position of Minister for SPLA Affairs, was in Juba April 25 to brief the Southern Sudan Defense Council's "special session" on Jonglei. Manieng was deeply dissatisfied with SPLA responses to the situation, concerned about continued defections of Nuer and Murle SPLA soldiers to violence-affected areas, and a vocal supporter of forced disarmament of the civilian population, particularly the Murle community. Manieng maintains that without greater SPLA engagement to prevent conflict, it will be impossible for him

to prevent reprisals or manage the security vacuum. Manieng controls the operations of his state's 900-member police force, but the force lacks the training, equipment, or communications and transport capacity, he says, to contain violence of this scale. (NOTE: There are only 90 police officers in all of Akobo County, none of whom have participated in UN-sponsored police training. END NOTE.)

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A HANDS-OFF SPLA  
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¶9. (SBU) A disengaged Minister for SPLA Affairs Nhial Deng Nhial told Acting CG on April 23 that he saw no role for SPLA involvement in Jonglei. When pressed he maintained that it is a decision ultimately for Southern Sudan's politicians -- not its military. "Our force is too small in Jonglei to make much of a difference anyway," he said. Acting Chief of General Staff MG Salva Mathok (Chief of General Staff Oyai Deng Ajak is presently in London and will return to Sudan in early May) offered a similar assessment, noting that while the Akobo company commander was being brought to Juba to account for his inaction during the April 18 violence, the real blame rests on politicians at the payam, and county-levels. "How can you be the County Commissioner and not be aware of arms entering your area, of growing tensions, of unrest? No one made the effort to reach out -- but they want us to engage civilians as if we can read minds?" Nhial and Mathok both staunchly oppose having the SPLA carry-out forced civilian disarmament in the region, citing the inability to avoid significant casualties and fatalities. Nhial in particular argued that the move would cause "an extremely problematic image for the SPLA and SPLM as we enter elections."

¶10. (SBU) UNRC Gressly told Acting CG on April 22 that UN DPKO had authorized the extraordinary restructuring of UNMIS forces in Jonglei state in the wake of last weekend's violence. UNMIS would shortly install a platoon-sized peacekeeping force in both Akobo and Pibor, and plus-up its force at the UN Team Site in Bor, the state capital. A Force Reserve would be established in either Bor or the Upper Nile state capital of Malakal (north of Akobo) in order to provide greater surge capacity in the face of renewed conflict. This would reduce the strain on Sector I peacekeepers, based in Juba, who were mobilized to support UNMIS's Sector III

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long-range patrols into the vicinity of Anyidi in early April. Positioning UNMIS forces in Akobo and Pibor would allow UN POL to co-locate with county-level police, providing office accommodations and improved communications abilities to an otherwise ill-equipped Southern Sudan Police Service.

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A UNILATERAL CHAPTER SEVEN DEPLOYMENT BY UNMIS  
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¶11. (SBU) Gressly discussed the internal controversy sparked by the April 5 Chapter Seven deployment by UNMIS to Anyidi, and its continued internal fallout. UNMIS/Southern Sector Civil Affairs charged the Sector III Commander with exceeding UNMIS's mandate, and problematically appearing to "take sides" within the context of a tribal clash by only protecting a Dinka Bor community. UNMIS peacekeepers then attempted to minimize potential political fallout by fabricating their patrol reports to indicate that they had actually reached Murle areas of Pibor County in an attempt to create a "buffer zone" between restive civilian populations. The UNMIS Force Commander later rescinded comments offered in appreciation of UNMIS's "sound approach" to the conflict, noting in a UN Country Team Meeting "troubling discrepancies" and noting that he had initiated an internal investigation into the matter. Acting CG pressed Gressly on the point, noting that both a buffer zone between civilian groups or deployment around specific villages were tantamount to an

operational deployment to protect civilians.

¶12. (SBU) Gressly argued that UNSCR 1590 allows for sufficient interpretation to support UNMIS interventions under the authority of Chapter Seven to support conflict mitigation and grass-roots reconciliation. "After all, there is more to CPA implementation than monitoring the parties' commitment to its milestones, and we've done this in 2005 and in 2006." He noted, however, that UNMIS presently lacks sufficient forces or equipment to carry out a robust Chapter Seven mandate in the South. (COMMENT: It remains unlikely that the GOSS would permit such activities in the South regardless. END COMMENT.) Gressly opined that his preferred approach to the current tensions within the region would be deployment of the SPLA troops to create a buffer zone, pre-positioning them as an inducement for peace, not threat of civilian disarmament.

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USG-PUSH FOR SPLA BUFFER ZONE  
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¶13. (SBU) Acting CG spoke at length with SPLA Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics MG Bior and Acting CoS Mathok about the possibility of an SPLA-managed buffer zone on April 22 and 23, noting its effectiveness in containing violence in Warrap State in 2008. Mathok was pessimistic about its chances for success, citing the logistical difficulties the SPLA would face in supporting troops positioned so far from population centers. (NOTE: Jonglei State is approximately the size of New York state. END NOTE.) Acting CG pressed Mathok and Bior to consider how to leverage a forthcoming USG-funded medical commodities shipment as a potential conflict-mitigator, noting that SPLA delivery of medicines to GOSS-identified civilian health centers in Jonglei State would augment SPLA troop-levels there in a passive fashion that might deter further violence. Bior believed the suggestion had merit, and noted he would ensure it would be tabled before the SPLA Taskforce examining Jonglei State.

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A STAGGERING SNAPSHOT OF SOUTHERN INSECURITY  
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¶14. (SBU) The UN Humanitarian Coordinator (UNHC) for Southern Sudan, Lisa Grande, informed Juba's diplomatic corps on April 23 that the previous week's violence in Jonglei pushed the total number of internally displaced persons in Southern Sudan for the first four-months of 2009 to over 100,000. Grande's counterpart in Darfur reported 310,000 IDPs for the 2008 calendar year. In Southern Sudan for that same period, the UN registered 187,000 IDPs. "It is clear to me that the South is in the midst of a crisis," she stated. Gressly differs with that assessment slightly, noting that while the scale of violence targeting civilians is disturbing, "we need to move away from the annual awakening" to the fact Southern

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Sudan is a violent place. It was subjected to decades of war, government capacity to contain violence is significantly constrained, and this issue has fallen off the donors' radar because of Darfur." He predicted that the situation in the South will continue to grow worse as the Referendum approaches, chiefly as a means to discredit the Government of Southern Sudan, and "perhaps as a means by Khartoum of forcing a trade-off between 'Southern peace' and Southern independence.,"

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JUBA SEES KHARTOUM'S HAND, PREPARES TO DEPLOY KIIR  
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¶15. (SBU) Nhial, Manieng, and Internal Affairs Minister Paul Mayom expressed similar sentiments. Mayom told Acting CG April 23 that he believes Southern turncoat Joseph Malwal has been annointed as Khartoum's "force majeure" against Southern

Sudan. Nhial noted the only difference between Riek Gai, Joseph Malwal, and "SPLM turncoat" Lam Akol is that Akol supports using "all measures" to undermine the SPLM in the South. This includes, according to Nhial, mobilizing militias as a counterpart to Akol's future Southern opposition political party "because since the SPLM has the SPLA, he will also need to be armed."

¶16. (SBU) Mayom believes that the recent violence in Jonglei is directly fueled by Khartoum, but also admits that the recent Dinka and Nuer reprisals against the Murle community is a grass-roots response to perceived GOSS abandonment of community security following last year's "coercive civilian disarmament" campaign in the South. "We took too long to address concerns, and perhaps we've depended on the wrong people," he said, in reference to former SSDF commander and (Murle) GOSS Presidential Advisor on Peace and Conflict Resolution Ismael Konye and (Nuer) GOSS Vice President Riek Machar. "It is time to bring the President in, not as a Dinka elder but as a unifying force for the South."

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COMMENT  
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¶17. (C) While northern tampering through receptive southern proxies is always possible, this latest round of violence in Jonglei appears to be reprisal-based ethnic violence, which threatens to escalate further in the coming months. While it is dangerous for the SPLA to intervene directly and risk being pulled into the violence based on perceived favoritism, the GOSS and SPLA may have no choice if they hope to retain the confidence of the affected populations ) and more importantly if they hope to keep what appears to be an escalating problem from getting out of control. Using the UN's own statistics, more civilians have died in tribal fighting in Jonglei in the past two months than were killed in Darfur in all of 2008.

FERNANDEZ